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Professional Socialization and Identity Development of Social Work Students

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Professional Socialization and Identity Development of Social Work Students

by

Cindy E. Locklear

A Banded Dissertation in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Social Work

Saint Catherine University | University of Saint Thomas
School of Social Work

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Abstract

Based on decades of research on general psychosocial human development, the majority of prominent theorists conclude that identity is best viewed from a developmental orientation. This banded dissertation furthers the scholarship of teaching and learning in the area of social work student professional identity development. The three scholarship products presented address how programs define and teach professional behavior through the explicit and implicit curriculum as defined by the Council on Social Work Education's Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards and apply a developmental model to foster student professional identity development.

Product 1 is a conceptual article that introduces a model for undergraduate social work student professional identity development based on the Chickering and Reisser (1993) theory of student development. Conceptual links are made between this theory and the implicit and explicit curriculum. A new social work student professional identity development model is presented.

Product 2 is a systematic literature review that provides a current picture of theory and available empirical data related to the development of professional identity of social work students. Literature published from 2002 to 2016, since the last systematic review of the topic, was analyzed. A total of 34 publications, a mix of empirical qualitative and quantitative studies, and conceptual articles were included. Findings presented characteristics of professional social workers as defined by social work students and educators, as well as components, models, and teaching recommendations for student professional identity development.

Product 3 is a peer-reviewed poster presentation based on the systematic literature review, Product 2 of this banded dissertation. The poster was presented at the 2016 Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting (APM). Findings of the systematic

literature review were reported including definitions of professional identity development in social work education, factors impacting professional identity development, and strategies for developing a professional social work identity. An integrated model to help social work educators enhance professional identity development and professional socialization through the explicit and implicit curriculum was presented. A summary of presentation evaluations, a reflection on learning, and an annotated bibliography are included in this report.

Educators are encouraged to create intentional spaces for work on professional identity development. There are many practical starting points for educators to integrate identity work inside and outside of classrooms presented within this banded dissertation such as reflective writing assignments, art projects, and guided discussion. Research on professional identity development for social work students has multiple possibilities including testing models of identity development in the implicit and explicit curriculum and measuring identity development through the field practicum experience. Literature on the process of professional identity development specific to social work students is necessary to better understand how CSWE accreditation standards related to professional identity are being met by social work education programs. Additional research is needed to develop a more comprehensive social work student professional identity development model that is tested with students and educators over time.

Dedication/Acknowledgements

This dissertation is dedicated to my son, Silas. Right now, you do not realize why mama was away so much for school. I hated leaving you but hopefully you will be proud one day. You are the reason I persisted when circumstances were bleak. I love you unconditionally with all my being.

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Professional Socialization and Identity Development of Social Work Students

This banded dissertation plan is part of a larger scholarship agenda that seeks to (1) determine how social work education programs are teaching professional behavior; (2) create an applied model of professional identity development and professional performance standards that can be used systematically across social work education programs; (3) determine what gatekeeping systems programs use to hold students accountable to standards of professional performance; and (4) stimulate ideas and generate best practices for gatekeeping within programmatic and institutional contexts. The following provides historical context, a review of the literature and definitions of key terms related to professional behavior and social work education.

Since the formative days of the social work profession in the early 20th century, social workers have stressed the importance of professional identity to present a cohesive picture of the profession to the public and to gain validity among the helping professions. The first social work education programs were based on practical experiences and charity organization societies' in-house training programs (Trattner, 1999). The Charity Organization Society movement in the late 1800s was the first to make attempts at socializing social workers to a set of professional values (Barretti, 2004a). The next formal step towards professionalization and professional identity for social workers came in the form of the first formal social work training schools in New York, Chicago and Boston formed from 1898 to 1904 (Trattner, 1999). The 1915 Flexner speech "Is Social Work a Profession" was a call to the profession to further define a distinct niche and unique knowledge base within the helping professions. Schools of social work have been on the forefront of defining this niche. Throughout the first half of the 20th century tensions existed, and still exist to some degree, between the charitable/humanitarian purpose of social

work and the commodity of social work as a profession (Wenocur & Reisch, 1989). This tension is central to understanding how social work educators view the profession and how they help students to form their professional identity.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), formed in 1952, represented a consolidated group of professional social work education associations and accreditation bodies (CSWE, 2017). This move enabled social work education to further emerge as a leader with a more solidified voice in the professional identity development of social work students. However, CSWE did not explicitly address a process for professional socialization or professional identity development for students. In general, early social work educators viewed professional socialization as a uniform process of indoctrination verses an individualized constructivist process (Barretti, 2004b). In 1973, CSWE first published accreditation standards that included curriculum content areas – professional identity development was not an explicit part of these standards. The 2008 CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) marked a major curriculum concept shift from both the 1994 standards and the 2001 EPAS by changing the focus from content to competencies and outcome-based measures. This shift also included the first explicit emphasis on teaching students how to identity as a professional social worker. Ten competencies and 41 practice behaviors were formulated to represent the knowledge, skills and values social work practitioners are expected to possess. In 2008, CSWE named “identity as a professional social worker” and “demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior” as a core competency and practice behavior, respectively, for social work students to achieve (CSWE, 2008, p. 3). The new 2015 EPAS standards include nine competencies and 31 suggested behaviors. Competency one articulates “demonstrate professional behavior” as an explicit standard for competency (CSWE, 2015b, p. 7). The implicit or “hidden curriculum” requires

programs to attend to “shaping the professional character and competence of the program’s graduates” (CSWE, 2015b, p. 14). CSWE EPAS accreditation standard 3.1 mandates that programs make clear the expectations of students regarding “professional performance” and that programs have procedures for termination and grievance “for reasons of academic and professional performance” (CSWE, 2015b, p. 15). With the focus on outcome-based competencies, programs must identify content, experiences and environments that will build the necessary knowledge, values, emotions and behavior needed to demonstrate the competencies (Petracchi & Zastrow, 2010).

There is a small but growing body of current literature on the process of professional identity development and professional socialization that is specific to social work students (Barretti, 2004a; Miller, 2010, 2013; Valutis, Rubin & Bell, 2012; Weiss, Gal, & Cnann, 2004; Wiles, 2013); however, conceptual frameworks and systematic studies remain scarce (Barretti, 2004a; Miller, 2010, 2013). The literature on the topic of teaching professional behavior in social work education programs centers on the terms “professional identity” and “professional socialization”.

The term “professional identity” has been defined in the social work literature as “the presence of a common core of agreed-on beliefs, values and interests among its members” (Bogo, Raphael & Roberts, 1993, p. 1). This same term has been defined in the broader social sciences literature as “internalization of the group’s values and norms in the person’s own behavior and self-concept” (Jacox, 1973; Cohen, 1981 as cited in Adams, Hean, Sturgis & Clark, 2006, p. 57). The term “professional socialization” has been defined in the social work literature as “a new role involv[ing] learning new behavior patterns and technical skills, crystalizing role expectations and reorganizing the self-image” (Varley, 1963, p. 102), and as a process of

understanding career role requirements and conceptualizing self as associated with those roles (McGowen & Hart, 1990). Sociological literature offers a broader definition - the formative process based on the desire to become part of a professional culture (Miller, 2010).

A systematic literature review by Barretti which sought to “present and characterize the empirical literature that relates to the professional socialization of social work students” (2004b, p. 255) “reveals broad disparities in breadth and depth” concerning the empirical literature on how social work students become professionals as compared to education and nursing professionals (2004b, p. 276). Barretti (2004b) urged future researchers to define professional socialization beyond the acquisition of values and to consider the effects of personal identity development and maturation. In a review of the available literature, the following variables have been linked in some way to professional socialization or professional identity development for social work students: classroom experiences, fieldwork, experiences outside of the classroom, supervision, social work value acquisition, age, gender, and anticipatory socialization. This banded dissertation advances knowledge in this area of inquiry.

Conceptual Framework

Based on decades of research on general psychosocial human development, the majority of prominent theorists conclude that identity is best viewed from a developmental orientation (Cass, 1979; Chickering, 1969; Cross, 1971; Erickson, 1959; Josselson, 1987; Kegan, 1982; Kolbgerg, 1972; Perry, 1970). Typically, these models of development have not been considered in the context of higher education, rather they are applied to education and development from birth through high school. Chickering first proposed a theory of psychosocial development specific to students in higher education in 1969 (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

Chickering's theory of student development was developed based on studies with undergraduate, traditionally aged college students. Chickering and Reisser (1993) expanded their research in 1993 to include more students from historically oppressed groups. They recommend the theory could be strengthened by application to additional diverse groups of undergraduate and graduate students. This author's work is based on the recommendations of Chickering and Reisser to expand and test their theory with a variety of student groups. The holistic nature and goals of the theory (Chickering & Reisser, 1993) are well aligned with the values and goals of social work education as defined by the CSWE EPAS (2015b). Through the work of this banded dissertation, Chickering and Reisser's theory will be explored for its usefulness as a framework for a developmental model for faculty to guide students' development of professional social work identity in the context of social work education. The Chickering and Reisser (1993) theory asserts that students who attend to the named domains will become adults who thrive in a global society because they are self-actualized, independent and interdependent, multiculturally aware, and interpersonally competent (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Chickering and Reisser view student development as a series of changes or shifts in thinking and behavior; it is difficult to see

such shifts as they are happening intrapsychically. Shifts in thinking occur based on a complex tapestry of experiences such as cultural immersion, service, conflict, and meeting new people.

Development can be seen over time. As Chickering and Reisser state,

We cannot easily discern what subtle mix of people, books, settings, or events promotes growth. But we can observe behavior and record words, both of which can reveal shifts from hunch to analysis, from simple to complex perceptions, from divisive bias to compassionate understanding (1993, p. 43).

The following represents a summary of the theory's main concepts/domains (Chickering & Reisser, 1993): (1) physical, athletic, artistic, social and intellectual competence; (2) ability to manage emotions; (3) autonomy and problem solving ability; (4) personal stability and self-acceptance; (5) interpersonal relationships; (6) clear career or vocational goals; and (7) a value system that respects beliefs of others and personal values that align with actions. These domains reflect the values of the social work profession and social work education and can assist with making professional identity development even more explicit for social work educators and students.

Summary of Scholarship Products

This banded dissertation includes three products. (1) A conceptual article illustrates a historical context and theoretical backdrop for professional identity development and student development in higher education. This article introduces a model for undergraduate social work student professional identity development based on the Chickering and Reisser theory of student development. Conceptual links are made between the Chickering and Reisser theory and infusion of professional identity development through the implicit and explicit curriculum. A new social work student professional identity development model is presented at the conclusion of this article. Applications for social work educators and possible uses in future research are discussed.

(2) A systematic literature review provides a current picture of theory and available empirical data related to the development of professional identity of social work students. This review is an update to the Barretti (2004b) systematic review. There are no other published systematic reviews on the topic of social work student professional identity development since 2004. The review considered all conceptual and empirical publications on this topic which were narrowed to 34 publications included in the study. Findings included educators' views and challenges on professional identity development as well as teaching strategy recommendations.

(3) A peer-reviewed poster presentation was based on the systematic literature review, product two of this banded dissertation. The poster was presented at the 2016 Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting (APM). The poster presented definitions of professional identity development in social work education, factors impacting professional identity development, and strategies and for developing a professional social work identity. An integrated model of student development designed to help social work educators enhance professional identity development through the implicit and explicit curriculum was illustrated.

Discussion

Product 1, *Student Development Theory: Guiding Professional Identity*

Formation for Social Work Students, builds on existing literature by integrating theory on general college student development with social work student professional identity development.

In this article, the author encourages social work educators to consider the Chickering and Reisser (1993) theory of student development in their work with students. This theory has historically been applied by institutions of higher learning in liberal studies but not applied specifically to professional programs. In this article, aspects of the implicit and explicit curriculum (CSWE, 2015b) were integrated with the Chickering and Reisser (1993) theory.

These linkages may be considered when designing curriculum and activities to support social work student professional identity development. For example, field curriculum can incorporate a focus on assisting students in their development of autonomy. Most literature on the professional identity development of social work students connects professional identity to value acquisition (Barretti, 2004b). The integration of the Chickering and Reisser (1993) theory with aspects of social work curricula offers a holistic and constructivist view of professional identity development by considering changes occurring in several domains of students' lives.

Product 2, *Professional Identity Development among Graduate and Undergraduate*

Social Work Students: A Systematic Literature Review, explores how social work education programs teach professionalism and professional identity development through the explicit and implicit curricula. Findings confirm a commonly cited problem with collective identity among social workers. Social work educators note identity confusion reflected in practice and in education programs (e.g. trouble with describing distinguishing features of social work verses other helping professionals). The characteristic of professional social workers most cited in

current literature is that social work has a unique domain of knowledge, skills, values and ethics distinguished from other professions (Barretti, 2004a; Clare, 2006; Gitterman, 2014; Mackay & Zufferey, 2015; Oliver, 2013; Scholar, 2013; Sewpaul, 2010; Wiles, 2013). However, defining this unique domain continues to be the subject of debate. Social work educators rely on guidance from professional social work associations and the CSWE to help them define the social work profession for themselves and their students.

Regarding the professional identity development process in social work education, frequent themes cited in the literature included: (1) professional identity development requires general self-reflection or introspection about the profession and use of self; (2) professional identity is constructed by interacting with other social workers (faculty, role models, supervisors); (3) professional identity development requires reflection on and reconciliation of personal and professional values (see table 2.2 for detailed citations). There was also an emphasis on the role of faculty and the implicit curriculum as co-creators and influencers of students' professional identity development. The findings of the study expand on the latest professional socialization/professional identity development systematic literature review conducted by Barretti (2004b) and existing social work student identity development models to include additional aspects of professional identity development and practical strategies for enhancing development.

A major goal of the CSWE Poster Presentation for Product 3, *Guiding Professional Identity Formation for Social Work Students: Poster Presentation*, was to increase the knowledge base for professional identity development for social work students by disseminating additional scholarship and furthering discussion to other social work educators. Attendees noted their interest in practical strategies and models to assist them with increasing a sense of

professional identity among their students. Attendees were typically not aware of existing social work student professional identity models from the literature. They agreed professional identity development among social work students is an area of opportunity for scholarship of teaching and learning in social work.

Implications for Social Work Education

Social work educators are urged to attend to the Chickering and Reisser theory of student development domains when creating curriculum, classroom content/activities, out-of-classroom experiences/opportunities, field practicum experiences and training for field supervisor (see Figure 1.1 for integrated model). Faculty interactions and modeling are an effective method for helping students with several domains. Social work educators should keep these domains in the forefront of their thoughts when planning and designing. Students are in constant flux and dealing with each of these domains throughout their developmental experience.

Furthermore, educators and students may benefit from a holistic view of professional identity development that involves a great deal of self-reflection and introspection (Askeland & Payne, 2006; Barretti, 2004a; Bolin, et al., 2014; Cagle, 2010; Cascio & Gasker, 2002; Clare, 2006, 2007; Daniel, 2011; Gitterman, 2014; Harrison, 2009; Larrison & Korr, 2013; McCaughan, Anderson & Jones, 2013; Miller, 2013; Mulder & Dull, 2014; Oliver 2013; Osteen, 2011; Rozas, 2004; Tsang, 2011; Urdang, 2010; Wiles, 2013). Identity development is as a complex process that begins prior to acceptance into a social work education program and continues throughout a career (Barretti, 2004a, 2004b; Bolin, et al., 2014; Daniel, 2011; Miller, 2013; Larrison & Korr, 2013; Oliver, 2013; Stepteau-Watson, 2012; Valutis, Rubin & Bell, 2012; Wiles, 2013). Confronting value conflicts and attempting to reconcile differences between personal and professional values is emphasized (Barretti, 2004a; Bolin, et al., 2014; Cagle, 2010;

Clare, 2007; Daniel, 2011; Kole & de Ruyter, 2009; Mackay & Zufferey, 2015; Osteen, 2011; Stanfield & Beddoe, 2016; Wiles, 2013). Since marginalization greatly impacts individual student and collective identity development, educators should consider and/or consult with students of color and other minority status students about reducing acts of oppression and discrimination within their social work education program (Daniel, 2007, 2011). Faculty, field supervisors, and other role models serving as mentors have a significant impact on the construction of professional identity for students (Askeland & Payne, 2006; Barretti, 2004a; Bogo & Wayne, 2013; Cascio & Gasker, 2002; Daniel, 2007; Larrison & Korr, 2013; Levy, Shlomo & Itzhaky, 2014; Oliver, 2013; Scholar, 2013; Shlomo, Levy & Itzhaky, 2012; Valutis, Rubin & Bell, 2012; Wiles, 2013). Faculty have a strong influence and could use this position as an opportunity to reflect a social worker identity whenever interacting with students both within and outside the classroom environment. Findings indicate students are interested in co-creating identities with other students and faculty (Askeland & Payne, 2006).

Educators reported difficulty with helping students define their identity as new professionals. They viewed the ability to define identity as a first step for helping professionals to decide how to behave as a professional during day-to-day interactions. Educators seek research-based models to help them walk students through a professional identity development process (Barretti, 2004a; Clare, 2006; Gitterman, 2014; Mackay & Zufferey, 2015; Oliver, 2013; Scholar, 2013; Sewpaul, 2010; Wiles, 2013).

Educators are encouraged to create intentional spaces for work on professional identity development. There are many practical starting points for educators to integrate identity work inside and outside of classrooms presented within this banded dissertation such as: (1) using a sculpting process to integrate values, skills, and knowledge with identity; (2) unpacking what

students bring to their educational program including impact of family of origin on professional identity; (3) using of BSW-MSW student mentoring or role models to increase the sense of professional identity. Identifying elements of professional identity for social workers, models for identity development, and teaching strategies all support the intent of CSWE to make professional identity more explicit throughout the curricula.

Implications for Future Research

Research on professional identity development for social work students has multiple possibilities. There is dearth of scholarship available to social work educators on professional identity development for social work students. Based on informal feedback provided during the CSWE poster presentation conducted by this author, there is a demand for this type of scholarship on teaching and learning strategies to aid students in the professional identity development process.

Literature on the process of professional identity development specific to social work students is necessary to better understand how CSWE accreditation standards related to professional identity are being met by social work education programs. Scholarship on teaching and learning strategies for the explicit and implicit curricula appear be of particular relevance. Educators may benefit from specific teaching strategies that can be embedded in the curriculum. Further discussion and study is needed to determine and test where the Chickering and Reisser (1993) domains best fit in the implicit and explicit curriculum. Each domain could be mapped across the implicit and explicit curriculum to determine where each domain could be supported with specific content, activities, interventions. This mapping could be used to decide if and where a domain or domains could be strengthened by additional teaching activities.

Additional research on how oppression and discrimination impacts the professional identity development of students of color and minority-identified students is needed. The multi-dimensional nature of identity development calls for respect and impact of culture, gender expression and historical oppression. These interpersonal factors cannot be separated from the professional identity development process as recognized by the Chickering and Reisser (1993) theory. Future research could explore how cultural and other differences shape how students think of what it means to be a professional and how they reconcile and express their professional identities. Additional research is needed to develop a more comprehensive and inclusive social work student professional identity development model that is tested with students and educators over time.

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Student Development Theory: Guiding Professional Identity

Formation for Social Work Students

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Abstract

This article introduces a model for undergraduate social work student professional identity development based on the Chickering and Reisser theory (1993) of student development. Conceptual links are made between the theory and infusion of professional identity development through the implicit and explicit curriculum. The Chickering and Reisser theory domains are compared to 2015 Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) and a new social work student professional identity development model is presented. Applications for social work educators and possible uses in future research are discussed.

Keywords: professional identity, professional behavior, social work education

Using Student Development Theory to Guide Social Work Student Professional Identity Formation

As a BSW/MSW program faculty member and field education director, I like many social work educators, experience several students each year who have difficulty with demonstrating professional behavior in the classroom and in field practicum settings. My colleagues and I have engaged in many discussions surrounding professional behavior and the process of forming a professional identity. We struggle with questions regarding how to best help students foster this sense of identity and ownership – belonging to the profession and behaving in a manner consistent with the profession’s purpose and values.

The purpose of this conceptual article is to introduce a professional identity development model, specific to undergraduate social work students, based on the Chickering and Reisser theory of student development. This model expands on existing models from the social work literature and aligns with 2015 EPAS. A review of the literature provides a historical overview of the role of student profession identity development in social work education as well as theoretical underpinnings of the Chickering and Reisser (1993) theory of student development. The Chickering and Reisser theory of student development complements several aspects of the EPAS explicit and implicit curriculum standards. The goal of this article is to explore curriculum applications of this model for undergraduate social work education programs.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) first issued accreditation standards in 1973 that included curriculum, staffing and organization mandates with explicit standards regarding the teaching of professionalism appearing first in the 2008 EPAS (CSWE, 2015a). In 2008, CSWE named “identify as a professional social worker” and “demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior” as a core competency and practice behavior, respectively (CSWE, 2008,

p. 3). In the new 2015 EPAS, Competency one names, “demonstrate ethical and professional behavior” (CSWE, 2015b, p. 7). In the implicit curriculum, programs are to attend to “shaping the professional character and competence of the program’s graduates” (CSWE, 2015b, p. 14). As social work programs implement the 2015 EPAS competencies with a focus on outcomes, it is imperative to identify content, experiences and environments that will build the necessary knowledge, values, cognitive and affective processes, and behaviors needed to demonstrate explicit and implicit professional behavior, demeanor, and character (CSWE, 2015b; Petracchi & Zastrow, 2010).

Social work education programs looking to the literature for guidance find a small but growing body of literature on the process of professional identity development and professional socialization that is specific to social work students (Barretti, 2004a; Miller, 2010, 2013; Valutis, Rubin & Bell, 2012; Weiss, Gal, & Cnann, 2004; Wiles, 2013); however, conceptual frameworks and systematic studies remain scarce (Barretti, 2004a; Miller, 2010, 2013). Barretti’s (2004b) systematic literature review found that studies on social work professional socialization focus on the change in knowledge and/or attitudes over time versus the process of “becoming” professional (p. 276). Barretti (2004a), Miller (2010) and Osteen (2011) present models to help social work educators guide students towards a developed professional identity. To expand on these models and increase understanding of the process of becoming a professional, it is useful to look beyond the social work literature to theory of general student development in higher education.

Chickering and Reisser Theory of Student Development

The following sections offer a summary of the conceptual framework on which the social work student professional identity model presented here is based. In addition, historical context,

theoretical underpinnings, key concepts, assumptions and propositions of the Chickering and Reisser (1993) theory are described. This theory of student development applied to undergraduate social work students is a new way of thinking about their professional development and behavior.

Based on decades of research on general psychosocial human development, a majority of prominent theorists conclude that identity is best viewed from a developmental orientation (Cass, 1979; Chickering, 1969; Cross, 1971; Erickson, 1959; Josselson, 1987; Kegan, 1982; Kolberg, 1972; Perry, 1970). Typically, these models of development have not been considered in the context of higher education, rather they are applied to education and development from birth through high school. Chickering first proposed a theory of psychosocial development specific to students in higher education in 1969 (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). This theory articulates seven vectors (defined as a carrier from one point to another) asserting that students who attend to these seven vectors will become adults who thrive in a global society because they are self-actualized, independent and interdependent, multiculturally aware, and interpersonally competent (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). The vectors explore the Erickson stages of development, identity vs. confusion and intimacy vs. isolation (Erickson, 1959). Findings from studies with undergraduate, traditionally-aged college students formed the basis of the conceptualization of the seven vectors of student development. Chickering and Reisser (1993) recommended the theory be strengthened by application to diverse groups of undergraduate and graduate students. The holistic nature and goals of the vectors are well aligned with the values and goals of social work education as defined by the CSWE EPAS (CSWE, 2015b). The vectors place emphasis on communication skills, emotional regulation, multicultural appreciation, value acquisition, integrity, personal identity development and self-awareness. Chickering and Reisser (1993)

encourage institutions of higher learning to create environments and experiences that attend to students' development as a whole person including mental, emotional, physical, moral and spiritual domains. The next sections provide a more in-depth description and analysis of the Chickering and Reisser theory.

Chickering and Reisser Theory of Student Development

Chickering and Reisser view the vectors as ways of recording changes or shifts in thinking and behavior because it is difficult to see such shifts as they are happening intrapsychically. Shifts in thinking occur from a complex tapestry of experiences. Development can be seen over time and assessed retrospectively. As Chickering and Reisser state:

We cannot easily discern what subtle mix of people, books, settings, or events promotes growth. But we can observe behavior and record words, both of which can reveal shifts from hunch to analysis, from simple to complex perceptions, from divisive bias to compassionate understanding (1993, p. 43).

The following represents a summary of the theory's main concepts organized by the seven vectors from Chickering and Reisser (1993): (1) Developing physical, athletic, artistic, social and intellectual competence including tasks such as acquiring knowledge, thinking critically, creating ideas and communicating with skill; (2) Managing emotions by increasing awareness of one's feelings, expressing feelings and controlling impulses; (3) Developing autonomy through increased emotional independence, self-direction, mobility and problem solving ability; (4) Establishing identity through personal stability and integration, self-acceptable, an increased sense of cultural heritage, increased comfort with body, gender expression and sexuality; (5) Establishing interpersonal relationships through increased acceptance of differences between individuals and an increased capacity for mature and intimate relationships; (6) Developing

purpose through clear career or vocational goals and meaningful commitments with other people, and (7) Developing integrity by shifting from rigid thinking to a value system that respects beliefs of others and aligning personal values and with actions.

Each task is viewed as key to the overall outcome of producing a well-rounded mature graduate with a diverse skill set who has integrity and values others. Chickering and Reisser's 1993 update of Chickering's original 1969 work sought to honor the diversity of students' perspectives by including more students of color, female students, non-heterosexual students and students with perspectives other than that of dominant society (Thieke, 1994). The summary of vectors above are reflective of the experiences of a more diverse student body. This more inclusive theory aligns with the value of diversity in social work education and makes the Chickering and Reisser theory more applicable to students in social work education programs. It is important that social work education programs attend to the process of professional development rather than only the outcome of professional behavior. Building on the vectors, the concepts and assumptions underlying the theory demonstrate further alignment with social work principles and values.

Major Assumptions and Concepts

The seven vectors assume that students and society at large benefit from a higher education system that values the development of their students throughout the life cycle (Chickering, 1981). The vectors' grounding in psychosocial development takes a holistic approach, viewing the student as a whole person with multiple intersecting needs as opposed to artificially separating the academic student role. The theory assumes development that occurs during traditional college-age years can be significantly influenced by macro and micro systems of higher education and that these systems should be amenable to providing experiences and

spaces that align with the vectors. Chickering and Reisser (1993) write extensively about how institutions can shape the college experience around the vectors and create a developmental process for students.

The vectors assume that development is task-oriented but not linear in nature. Students can move in and between tasks at different points throughout their higher education experience. Each student's process is different depending on the past experiences they bring, their development until they reach college and their cultural and faith traditions/beliefs. All development is shaped by social norms and culture and therefore what is viewed as healthy or positive growth and development is highly dependent on societal norms and values which are in constant flux (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

The seven vectors describe interrelated and overlapping phases or tasks that students should move through to achieve desirable traits in a global society. Based on the vectors' assumptions and concepts the following propositions can be made: (1) If students are supported and exposed to external stimuli that provide opportunities to challenge their beliefs related to the seven vectors then students will experience positive shifts in thinking and overall growth; (2) If students are sufficiently challenged and supported to accomplish the tasks contained within each vector then students will have greater capacity for meaningful interpersonal relationships, better academic skills, increased integrity and a multicultural and inclusive worldview. The major assumptions underlying the vectors are akin to the person-in-environment perspective and ideas of holism that are deeply rooted in social work practice.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Prior to the 1960's little attention was paid to the interpersonal, psychosocial development of students in post-secondary education settings (Chickering, 1981). Students were

widely viewed as recipients of knowledge passed on from disciplinary experts. Students were expected to retain this knowledge and translate it into skills that could be used in the world of work (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Cognition was the focus rather than the interplay of cognition, emotion, personality, culture and identity.

The vectors align closely with person-in-environmental theories, valued in social work education and practice, because of their assumption the person (student) is constantly interacting with and being shaped by the environment (institution of higher learning and other systems). The vectors highlight how students develop over time through their interactions with other students, faculty, family, academic content, artistic expression, athletics, cultural expression, religious expression, gender expression, sexuality, their own bodies and physical spaces (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Chickering notes how each student can experience the same environment differently depending on their individual developmental process (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

The vectors are grounded in Sanford's challenge and support theory that asserts students must achieve a certain level of discomfort while feeling secure in order to experience shifts in thinking and experience growth (Sanford, 1962). The vectors emphasize that a certain level of disequilibrium must be present to move through a developmental process (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Chickering created a new concept that incorporated Erickson's task-based development model and expanded on the identity vs. identity confusion crisis while building on Sanford's concepts related to student growth and paradigm shifting.

Since the original publication in 1969, Chickering partnered with Linda Reisser, a leading academic with a focus on non-traditional college students, to produce and publish an updated version of the vectors in the second edition of *Education and Identity* (1993). The aim of the second edition was to include research conducted since the first edition that was more inclusive

of underrepresented populations and to update the theory to reflect the experiences of these populations. Chickering and Reisser heavily cite the meta-analysis conducted by Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) that “reviewed every major research report since 1967 on the impact of higher education on student development” (Chickering & Reisser, 1993, p. 1). They used the results of this analysis to further validate their research and strengthen the theoretical underpinnings of the vectors. Chickering and Reisser note several theories that helped to shape the 1993 version of the vectors partially including: Cross’ (1971) model of black identity formation, Josselson’s (1987) pathways to identity development, Cass’ (1979) gay and lesbian identity model, Kolb’s (1969) theory of moral development, Kegan’s (1982) evolving self, Kolb’s (1976) learning styles, Myers-Briggs (1980) typology, and Banning and Kaiser’s (1974) campus ecology theories (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Chickering and Reisser’s updated vectors demonstrate an evidence-based systematic evolution that synthesizes their own new research, new related theory and analysis of the literature. This broader use of existing theory and new research that includes more diverse student groups again demonstrates more applicability to students in a professional social work education program.

Literature Review

The following summarizes a review of the literature on the concept of, and teaching practices related to, professional identity development and professional socialization of social work students. The review begins with representative definitions for key terms, includes a description of themes associated with professionalism in social work education and ends with existing models for professional socialization and identity development for social work students. A 2004 systematic literature review by Barretti collected, summarized and interpreted the empirical literature related to professional socialization in social work education (2004b) and

revealed a deficiency of studies and inconsistencies among studies. This systematic review included all relevant literature since 2004, therefore this article includes an examination of the peer-reviewed literature from 2000 to current. Findings of these studies center on the role of social work education programs in the professional socialization of students and the factors students bring to their education/social work program. There are three existing models specific to the professional socialization or professional identity development of social work students: (a) the Miller (2010) Professional Socialization Model; (b) the Osteen (2011) Personal and Professional Identity Integration Model; and (c) the Barretti (2004a) socialization model.

Defining Professionalism in Social Work Education

Professional identity has long been a concern of the social work profession and social work education programs have taken the lead to define and teach professionalism (Barretti, 2004a; Gitterman, 2014; Merdinger, 1982; Payne, 2006; Varley, 1963). Since the formative days of the social work profession in the early 20th century, social workers have stressed the importance of professional identity to present a cohesive picture of the profession to the public and to gain validity among the helping professions.

The literature on the topic of teaching professional behavior in social work education programs centers on the terms “professional identity” and “professional socialization”. The term “professional identity” has been defined in the social work literature as “the presence of a common core of agreed-on beliefs, values and interests among its members” (Bogo, Raphael & Roberts, 1993, p. 1). This same term has been defined in the broader social sciences literature as “internalization of the group’s values and norms in the person’s own behavior and self-concept” (Jacox, 1973; Cohen, 1981 as cited in Adams, Hean, Sturgis & Clark, 2006, p. 57). The term “professional socialization” has been defined in the social work literature as “a new role

involv[ing] learning new behavior patterns and technical skills, crystallizing role expectations and reorganizing the self-image” (Varley, 1963, p. 102), and as a process of understanding career role requirements and conceptualizing self as associated with those roles (McGowen & Hart, 1990). Miller offers a broader definition from the social sciences literature, the formative process based on the desire to become part of a professional culture (2010). These definitions provide a starting place for understanding the complex concept of professional identity.

Development of a Professional Identity in Social Work Education Programs

The literature on social work education and professional socialization and identity development demonstrates the difficulty with measuring a multi-dimensional long-term process (Baretti, 2004b). Baretti (2004b) urged future researchers to define professional socialization beyond the acquisition of values and to consider the effect of personal identity development and maturation. Barretti (2004b) found that studies on social work professional socialization focused on the change in knowledge and/or attitudes over time rather than the process of “becoming” professional (p. 276). Since this 2004 systematic review there have been no other comprehensive or systematic literature reviews on this topic published in peer-reviewed social work literature. Findings from separate studies since 2000 are difficult to synthesize due to the variations in their aims, methods and results. It is important to review current models of professional identity development because students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior in the classroom and in field practicums. Students need guidance through this process and developmental models appear to be a helpful tool for educators. Therefore, the examination of professional identity development models for social work students in undergraduate programs is relevant and timely.

Shlomo, Levy and Itzhaky (2012) conducted a study of 160 senior BSW students and found two factors that contributed to the development of professional identity for students, satisfaction with field supervision and personal values. The authors note this finding is consistent with previous studies (Bogo, 2010; Barretti, 2009 as cited in Shlomo, Levy and Itzhaky, 2012). In a separate but similar study Levy, Shlomo and Itzhaky (2014) found satisfaction with supervision, personal values and empathic concern were associated with identifying as a professional social worker. Wiles' (2013) analysis demonstrated an individual process of development that incorporated desired traits and shared identity with other social workers. These studies present varied findings related to professional socialization and professional identity development but are limited in their practical uses. They do not consider where or how these factors relate to the explicit or implicit curriculum.

Miller (2013) conducted an empirical study of professional socialization, which measured commitment to social work values, social work idealism and social work identity comparing beginning BSW students to alumni who were five years post-MSW. A convenience sample of current BSW and MSW students from 25 different classes (exact sample size of current students not provided) and a random sample of 500 MSW alumni at a public mid-Atlantic University were included in the study. Current students and alumni were given three measures (the Professional Opinion Scale, the Social Work Idealism assessment and the Social Work Identity assessment) all designed to capture attitudes and beliefs related to social work identity. Study findings included relationships between professional identity and gender socialization, age and anticipatory socialization or identification with the profession prior to entering a program of study (Miller, 2013). Variations in the level of identification with the profession appear to be

impacted by age, gender and anticipatory socialization - also found in studies by Barretti (2004a) and Valutis, Rubin and Bell (2012).

To summarize, the limited body of research in this area draws mixed conclusions. Historically, studies have focused on value acquisition as a measure of socialization to the profession or identification with the profession, therefore most data links values alone to professionalism (Barretti, 2004a; Barretti, 2004b). More recent studies have drawn additional links between professional identity development and relationships with supervisors, shared identity, age, gender and anticipatory socialization. Factors, such as age and gender, cannot be controlled by social work education programs but should be considered in order to design curriculum that attends to student diversity. In the review of the literature, there is a gap when seeking to understand if infusion of professional identity development activities/teaching strategies through the explicit and implicit curriculum would increase identification with the profession and decrease undesirable behaviors among social work students. Making links to the implicit and explicit curriculum would increase the usability of study data and existing models. To understand relevant theory on models of professional identity development, the following section summarizes current models derived from studies about the professional identity development of social work students.

Existing Models

The Miller Professional Socialization Model begins with pre-socialization (i.e., prior and anticipatory socialization) and includes formal socialization (i.e., content and structure) and practice after formal socialization (i.e., practice setting and situational adaptation) processes (Miller, 2010, p. 930). This model contends that experiences back to childhood, through formal education and after formal education all impact how a social worker becomes socialized to the

profession. Movement through the model overlaps and is ongoing throughout one's career. Outcomes of the model include development of knowledge and skills, values, attitudes and professional social work identity which are aligned with CSWE EAPS (Miller, 2010; CSWE, 2015b).

The Osteen Personal and Professional Identity Integration Model emphasizes the congruency of personal and professional values as motivation to enter a social work professional program (2011). This idea is similar to the anticipatory socialization aspect of the Miller (2010) model. The Osteen model describes the need for students to evaluate and negotiate these incongruences in order to then integrate professional and personal identities. Social work educators are urged to support students in managing value conflicts (Osteen, 2011).

The Barretti socialization model (2004a) was developed based on a qualitative study of 20 BSW students. The model is comprised of six phases: (1) expectation – experiences of compatibility to social work (similar to pre-socialization), (2) revelation – initial experiences with social work program, (3) refutation – students doubt their compatibility with the program, (4) negotiation – students use tools to lower stress and maintain status in the program, (5) adaptation – students reflect on growth over time and feel more confident, (6) affirmation - students report varying degrees of identification with the profession, acknowledge the profession requires lifelong learning and students feel a sense of autonomy. Overall the study and model acknowledge the value of viewing professional identity from a developmental perspective, one that is both methodical and convoluted (Barretti, 2004a).

These models further understanding of professional identity development as a layered and longitudinal process. They can help social work educators recognize areas to consider when developing policies, advisement procedures, and other areas of the implicit curriculum as well as

within the explicit curriculum. Building on these models using the highly valued Chickering and Reisser (1993) theory from the field of higher education can further aid social work educators in their understanding of identity development. The following social work student professional identity development model was developed by the author as a new way of thinking about professional identity development for social work students. It is based on existing studies specific to social work education combined with the Chickering and Reisser (1993) theory and cross referenced with aspects of the 2015 CSWE EPAS.

Social Work Student Professional Identity Development Model

Figure 1. Social work student professional identity development model.



The model presented above integrates the Chickering and Reisser (1993) theory of student development with activities and aspects of social work education programs. The model reflects a cyclical process that students are moving in and out of throughout their program of

study and after. It also acknowledges the impact of prior anticipatory socialization frequently discussed in the literature review. Central is the development of competency outlined by CSWE EPAS through the demonstration of nine competencies and 31 associated behaviors. Each of the surrounding six domains are all occurring simultaneously while students are working on developing social work competency in practice. Field education is the signature pedagogy of social work education and it provides opportunities for students to develop in each of the six surrounding domains. Each of the domains is reflective of aspects of the EPAS explicit and/or implicit curriculum.

Implications for Social Work Educators

The purpose of this model is to encourage social work educators to consider the Chickering and Reisser (1993) theory of student development in their work with students. This theory has historically been applied by institutions of higher learning in liberal studies but not applied specifically to professional programs. The model provides recommended aspects of the implicit and explicit curriculum to consider in the development of each domain but each domain is not limited by the activities and aspects of the curriculum mentioned in the model. Social work educators are urged to attend to each of the seven domains when developing curriculum, classroom content/activities, out-of-classroom experiences/opportunities, field practicum experiences and training for field supervisor. Faculty interactions and modeling are an effective method for helping students with several domains. Social work educators should keep these domains in the forefront of their thoughts when planning and designing. Students are in constant flux and dealing with each of these domains throughout their developmental experience. Further discussion and study is needed to determine and test where these domains best fit in the implicit and explicit curriculum. Specific content, activities, interventions and could be mapped across

implicit and explicit curriculum to determine where each domain is addressed. This mapping could be used to decide if and where a domain or domains could be strengthened.

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Professional Identity Development among Graduate and Undergraduate Social Work Students:

A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Professional identity has long been a concern of the social work profession, the Council on Social Work Education, and social work education programs. This systematic literature review provides a current picture of theory and available empirical data related to the development of professional identity of social work students. Literature published from 2002 to 2016, since the last systematic review of the topic, was analyzed. A total of 34 publications, a mix of empirical qualitative and quantitative studies, and conceptual articles were included. Findings involved characteristics of professional social workers as defined by social work students and educators, as well as components, models, and teaching recommendations for student professional identity development. Applications for social work educators and uses in future research are discussed.

Keywords: professional identity, professional behavior, professional identity development

Professional Identity Development among Graduate and Undergraduate Social Work Students: A Systematic Literature Review

Since the formative days of the social work profession in the early 20th century, social workers have stressed the importance of professional identity to present a cohesive picture of the profession to the public and to gain validity among the helping professions. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) first issued accreditation standards in 1973 that included curriculum, staffing, and organizational mandates as well as explicit standards regarding the teaching of professionalism first noted in the 2008 EPAS (CSWE, 2015a). In 2008, CSWE named “identify as a professional social worker” and “demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior” as a core competency and practice behavior (CSWE, 2008, p. 3). In the 2015 EPAS, Competency one notes, “demonstrate ethical and professional behavior” (CSWE, 2015b, p. 7). Furthermore, in the implicit curriculum, programs are to attend to “shaping the professional character and competence of the program’s graduates” (CSWE, 2015b, p. 14). As social work programs implement the 2015 EPAS competencies with a focus on outcomes, it is imperative to identify content, experiences, and environments that will build the necessary knowledge, values, cognitive and affective processes, and behaviors needed to demonstrate the formation of a professional identity (CSWE, 2015b; Petracchi & Zastrow, 2010).

The Council on Social Work Education offers standards and expected outcomes but does not necessarily offer specific guidance on how to support students in forming a professional identity. The literature presents a potentially disconnected picture of what the professional identity development process would look like in social work education programs. For instance, Shlomo, Levy and Itzhaky (2012) identified two factors that contributed to the development of professional identity for students: satisfaction with supervision and personal values. In a

separate, yet similar study, Levy, Shlomo and Itzhaky (2014) noted satisfaction with supervision, personal values, and empathic concern were associated with identifying as a professional social worker. Wiles' (2013) analysis demonstrated an individual process of development that incorporated desired traits and shared identity with other social workers. These studies present various findings that are helpful toward understanding how students view professionalism and professional identity development. However, the studies do not communicate either where or how these factors relate to the explicit or implicit curriculum. To better understand this subject in practical terms, it is essential to explore how students and faculty perceive professionalism and both the professional socialization and professional identity development of students. Therefore, this systematic literature review will explore how social work education programs teach professionalism and professional identity development through the explicit and implicit curricula.

Background

Professional identity has been a consistent area of concern within the social work profession and social work education programs have taken the lead to define and teach professionalism (Barretti, 2004a; Gitterman, 2014; Merdinger, 1982; Payne, 2006; Varley, 1963). A 2004 systematic literature review by Barette collected, summarized, and interpreted the empirical literature related to professional socialization in social work education (2004b) and revealed a deficiency of studies and inconsistencies among studies. Existing studies overwhelmingly tie professional identity to identification with social work values and ethics.

The literature on teaching professional behavior in social work education programs focuses on the terms "professional identity" and "professional socialization." The term "professional identity" has been defined in the social work literature as "the presence of a

common core of agreed-on beliefs, values and interests among its members” (Bogo, Raphael & Roberts, 1993, p. 1). This same term has been defined in the broader social sciences literature as “internalization of the group’s values and norms in the person’s own behavior and self-concept” (Cohen, 1981 as cited in Adams, Hean, Sturgis & Clark, 2006, p. 57). The term “professional socialization” has been historically defined in the social work literature as “a new role involv[ing] learning new behavior patterns and technical skills, crystallizing role expectations and reorganizing the self-image” (Varley, 1963, p. 102), and as a process of understanding career role requirements and conceptualizing self as associated with those roles (McGowen & Hart, 1990). Miller offers a broader definition from the social sciences literature, defining it as the formative process based on the desire to become part of a professional culture (2010). These definitions provide a foundation for understanding the complex concept of professional identity.

The literature on social work education, professional socialization, and identity development demonstrates the difficulty of measuring a multi-dimensional long-term process (Barretti, 2004b). Barretti (2004b) urged future researchers to define professional socialization beyond the acquisition of values and to consider the effect of personal identity development and maturation. Barretti (2004b) further noted that studies on social work professional socialization focused on the change in knowledge and/or attitudes over time rather than the process of “becoming” professional (p. 276). Since this 2004 systematic review, there have been no other comprehensive or systematic literature reviews on this topic published in peer-reviewed social work literature despite multiple revisions to the EPAS and several articles written on this subject. Therefore, it is important to review current ideas, theory, and models of professional identity development since students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior in the classroom and in field practicums. Graduate and undergraduate social work students need guidance through

this process and developmental models present as supportive tools for educators. As a result, the examination of professional identity development for social work students in undergraduate and graduate programs is relevant and timely.

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to provide a current picture of theory and available empirical data related to professional socialization and professional identity of social work students. A systematic review of the literature is noted as best practice when seeking to answer a research question using existing published studies (Boland, Cherry & Dickson, 2014). A systematic literature review locates, assesses, and synthesizes all available research using transparent inclusion and exclusion criteria. Explicit and systematic review criteria set systematic literature reviews apart from standard literature reviews and editorials (Khan, et al., 2003). This systematic review of the literature uses qualitative analysis of empirical studies and conceptual and theoretical articles on the subject of professionalism and professional identity development of undergraduate and graduate social work students.

Search Strategy

This search strategy was developed in consultation with a social science research librarian and doctoral faculty advisor. The following databases were searched for literature published from 2002 to 2016: Soc Index, Social Work Abstracts, PsychInfo, ERIC and Academic Search Premier. These databases include social work, social science, and higher education literature. The most recent systematic literature review (Barretti) on this topic was published in 2004. The search strategy included articles published in 2002 to include all literature published since the Barretti (2004b) review. In addition to electronic database searches,

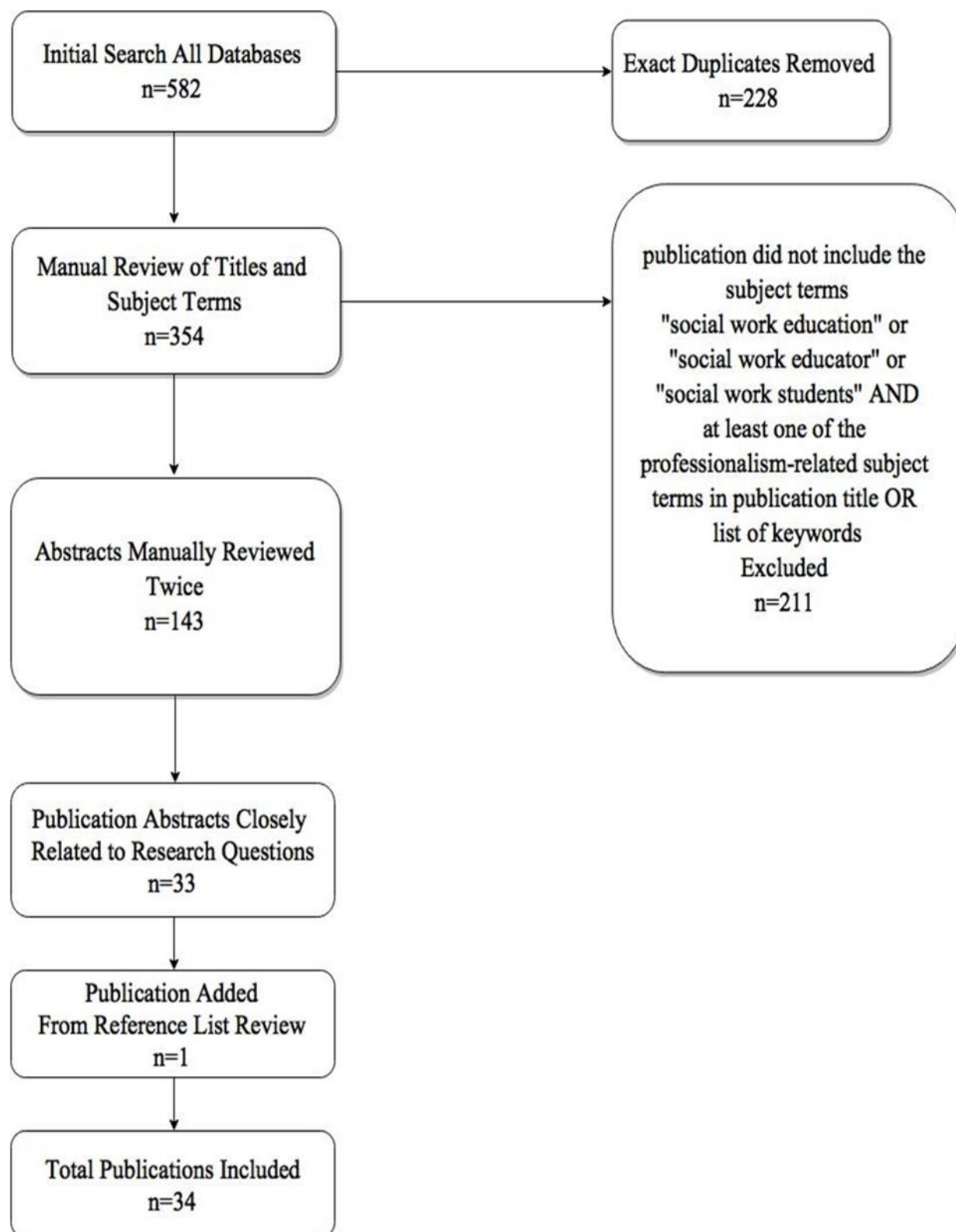
the reference lists of selected articles were reviewed to ensure a comprehensive process. The following search terms were entered using a Boolean search for each database:

("social work education" OR "social work educator" OR "social work student*") AND ("professionalism" OR "professional socialization" OR "professional identity" OR "professional identity development" OR "professionalization")*

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Publications were included in this review if they met all the following criteria: (a) published peer-reviewed literature using qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods and conceptual and theoretical articles, (b) published from January 2002 to August 2016, (c) written in English, (d) included variables or discussion on professional socialization or professional identity in the context of social work education. Literature focused on professionalism solely in the context of social work practice versus social work education was not included. Literature with a narrow focus on professional identity in a particular field of social work practice (e.g. preparing social work students for practice in child welfare) were excluded. Criteria were used to include a variety of quality publications related closely to the aims of this review.

Figure 1. Flowchart of search strategy.



Data Analysis

The initial subject term search including all databases resulted in 582 publications. After exact duplicates were removed (n=228), a manual review of titles and subject terms was conducted for 354 publications. Publications that did not include the subject terms “social work education” or “social work students” and at least one of the professionalism-related subject terms listed above in either the title or the list of keywords were excluded (n=211). Abstracts were manually reviewed twice for the remaining (n=143) publications. Publication abstracts that closely related to this review’s research questions (how social work education programs teach professionalism and how faculty define their role in the professional socialization and the professional identity development of students) were included resulting in 33 publications. A review of these publications’ reference lists resulted in one (n=1) additional publication that met inclusion criteria. The total number of publications included in the review was N=34. See Figure 1 for illustration of method.

Results

Of the total (N=34) publications included in the review 15 (44%) were considered conceptual or theoretical arguments, 12 (35%) were empirical studies using qualitative methods, five (15%) were empirical studies using quantitative methods, and two (6%) were empirical studies using mixed (both qualitative and quantitative) methods. The majority of articles (67%) were published in journals specifically for scholarship related to social work education. This review included all publications written in English regardless of the country of origin. Of the total number of publications, 50% of studies and articles were conducted and/or written in countries other than the United States such as Israel, the United Kingdom, China, Canada, Australia and Denmark.

Sampling and Methods

Conceptual articles used a variety of theoretical underpinnings in their arguments; there were no commonly used theories. Conceptual articles were mainly written by social work educators with the aim of integrating their own experiences with existing theory to devise strategies that improve the process of professional identity development for social work students. Conceptual articles produced or suggested models, new theories, or teaching strategies.

Eight (66%) of the qualitative studies used semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis, one used focus groups, two used case study designs, and one used a systematic review of the literature. Seven samples (58%) included BSW or MSW or a combination of BSW and MSW students, three (25%) included educators and field supervisors, one (8%) included practitioners, and one (8%) included publications for systematic review. Qualitative study sample sizes ranged from one (case studies) to 50 individual participants (semi-structured interviews).

Quantitative studies used instruments to measure social work value acquisition, professional identity, professional preferences, personal identity, empathy, satisfaction with supervision, self-efficacy, and coherence. Samples included BSW or MSW or BSW and MSW students. Sample sizes ranged from 160 to 489 students.

Two mixed methods studies were included. Study participants consisted of samples of MSW and BSW students combined ranging from 28 to 79 students. One mixed methods study used pre and posttests to measure social work values as a measure of professional identity combined with a qualitative analysis of email exchanges between students. The other mixed methods study used a professional identity survey mixed with a qualitative analysis of six-word memoirs.

Most samples reflected the larger student, educator or practitioner populations that were the focus of the study in terms of race, gender and age. Samples were largely female, however, this reflects the significantly higher ratio of females-to-males in the social work profession as a whole. Studies in the United Kingdom included mostly White or Caucasian participants which was reflective of the national population of social workers and social work students. Two study samples were composed entirely of racial minority students in studies where the impact of minority status was a focus.

Table 1

Summary of findings and concepts

<i>Study</i>	<i>Journal</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Sample/ Theoretical Basis</i>	<i>Methods</i>	<i>Findings/Thesis/Implications Related to Social Work Student Professional Identity Development</i>
Askeland & Payne (2006)	<i>Journal of Teaching in Social Work</i>	Concept	post-modernism	educator reflection	post-modern social work students co-create personal and professional identities with faculty rather than a banking system of imparting knowledge
Barretti (2004a)	<i>The Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work</i>	Qual	20 senior BSW students at US University	semi-structured interviews; thematic analysis	presents model of professional socialization: expectation (begin program encounter realities and agents of socialization), revelation (struggle with stress and inconsistencies between expectations and reality), refutation (struggles prompt students to devise coping skills), negotiation (reconciliation and making internal adjustments), adaptation (accept themselves, new identities and profession for what it is), affirmation (renew or adjust commitment to social work); found students mirrored this process with role models; process is full of conflict; process begins well before program and continues well after; students sought role models similar to themselves in terms of race, age or gender; students of color saw themselves working with poor and for social justice more than whites; found almost everything faculty do and say influenced students; viewed faculty as powerful co-creators of identity
Barretti (2004b)	<i>Journal of Social Work Education</i>	Qual	systematic review with 29 empirical articles	systematic review	professional socialization overwhelmingly defined by acquisition of values and attitudes; no agreement about what those values are or how to measure them; oversimplifies professional identity or professional socialization process; studies reviewed present mixed results in terms of impact of gender, race, age and socioeconomic status and professional socialization; found professional identity development process does not start or end with formal education

Bogo & Wayne (2013)	<i>Journal of Teaching in Social Work</i>	Concept	culture of human interchange	educator reflection	social work educators should use implicit curriculum to foster culture of human interchange that reinforces professionalism taught in explicit curriculum; educators have opportunities to model and intervene in negative moments in classroom, meetings and field experiences
Bolin, et al. (2014)	<i>Professional Development: The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education</i>	Qual & Quan	79 social workers with BSW/MSW degrees and BSW/MSW students at US University	Participants wrote 6-word memoirs based on Mead's work; professional identity survey and qualitative analysis of memoirs	written memoirs categorized as personal, external or integrated; those categorized as personal also self-reported as lowest competency rating (can be seen as Mead's "preparing stage" emerging social worker identity); external reported higher competency (can be seen as "play stage" beginning role taking and experimenting as in practicum); most participants were in integrated category and reported highest levels of competency (can be seen as Mead's "game stage" professional actualization, embracing roles); participants viewed professional identity as empowerment, helping, change, caring, empathy, advocacy, and compassion; educators can use memoirs as tool to help students with the ongoing process of professional identity development
Cagle (2010)	<i>Reflections</i>	Concept	privilege and oppression	educator reflection	social work educators should help students with identifying and assessing their own experiences of oppression and privilege; everyone has a mix of both which impacts use of self as social workers and professional identity
Cascio & Gasker (2002)	<i>The Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work</i>	Qual & Quan	14 BSW and 14 MSW students parried as mentee and mentors respectively and control group at US University	pre and posttest using core social work values scale; qualitative analysis of email exchanges using groups theory	professional identity defined as shared sense of identity and shared set of values; quantitative results showed a significant increase in identification with the profession as based on social work value acquisition for BSW mentees (control group and MSW mentor group no change); qualitative results showed students corresponding about professional and educational experiences, enthusiasm for profession; anxiety and direct requests/responses for advice; underscores need for expression and validation, mentees experienced positive relationships that guided them; mentors benefited from explaining their role and enthusiasm of mentees

Clare (2006)	<i>Social Work Review</i>	Qual	20 MSW practitioners and 17 MSW students in Australia	semi-structured interviews; dialogical engagement	presents model of “the robust professional persona” including four dimensions (personal philosophy of practice within hopeful vision of purpose and place, an empowered stance to practice, an insider-outsider stance, and provisional certainty or ability to make independently sound judgements while remaining open to new information); participants identified themselves as professionals but were unable to produce a common definition and did not feel a part of social work professional collective; recommends social work educators help students with developing holistic identity
Clare (2007)	<i>Social Work Education</i>	Concept	ontological security	educator reflection	ontological security as key to professional identity; deep learning helps facilitate this security
Daniel (2007)	<i>Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare</i>	Qual	15 MSW students of color at US University; critical race theory	semi-structured interviews; thematic analysis	students of color reported experiences impacting their development of professional identity; cultural and racial isolation, lack of relevance of the curriculum to minority issues, invisibility and distance from program staff, interaction with faculty and peers, mentoring and support, race and supervision; recommend including students of color as outsiders-within to provide insight and strategies to improve programs; discrimination, exclusion and marginalization impacts the professionalization of students of color
Daniel (2011)	<i>Social Work Education</i>	Qual	45 undergrad and 15 MSW students at US University	semi-structured interviews; thematic analysis; cross-case analysis	racial minority students displayed strong interest in social justice and social change; more likely to express interest in macro social work; believe social work is best career to work with vulnerable and oppressed populations; see social work as a way to express cultural value of giving back to the community; recommend educators help increase fit between students’ interests and aspirations through professional socialization process from recruitment to post-graduation
Gitterman (2014)	<i>Journal of Social Work Education</i>	Concept		educator reflection	suggests social work educators teach about historical tensions regarding the identity of the profession as macro or micro, art or science, person or environment, clinical or social action, evidence-based practice/manualized

					practice or spontaneous/creative/client-lead practice; misleading dichotomies; students need to understand history in order to develop their own professional identity
Harrison (2009)	<i>Social Work Education</i>	Concept	narrative theory	educator reflection	story-telling is one way to ensure students do not drift through their social work program unchallenged; story-telling in small groups can help challenge students to understand and integrate personal and professional values with knowledge base; helps with critical reflection and development of more complex understanding of professional self
Kole & de Ruyter (2009)	<i>Ethics and Social Welfare</i>	Concept	professional ideals	educator reflection	being professional is part of personal identity; ideals are necessary parts of personal and professional identity; profession needs collective ideals
Larrison & Korr (2013)	<i>Journal of Social Work Education</i>	Concept	Shulman's concept of signature pedagogy	educator reflection	presents expanded concept of signature pedagogy for social work education that goes beyond field education; argues field alone does not meet criteria for Shulman's or EPAS' idea of signature pedagogy; development of self is an essential aspect of social work signature pedagogy that links teaching and learning to practice; recommend educators focus on "knowing and doing"/"thinking and acting like a social worker" along with "being" or use of self and congruence between personal and professional selves; relational investment between social work educators and students influential in determining professional identity; process is life-long and not linear; does not end with end of formal education
Levy, Shlomo & Itzhaky (2014)	<i>Social Work Education</i>	Quan	160 senior BSW students from Israeli University	questionnaire satisfaction with supervision, professional identity formation	satisfaction with supervision, personal values, and empathic concern were directly and positively associated with professional identity; development of identity is a complex process that involves main components of satisfaction with supervision, strong values, and empathic ability
Mackay & Zufferey (2015)	<i>Journal of Social Work</i>	Qual	12 social work educators from	semi-structured interviews;	no one definition of professionalism; view social workers as having unique and specific knowledge, skills, values and ethics distinguishable from other professions; view

			two Australian Universities	discourse analysis	professional identity as “part of being” and/or as "hats or cloaks" to be taken on and off
McCaughan, Anderson & Jones (2013)	<i>Journal of Practice Teaching & Learning</i>	Qual	one social work practicum site that incorporates art and design with client work	case study	suggests use of arts by social workers with clients in groups and individually to help facilitate professional identity development
Miller (2010)	<i>Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment</i>	Concept	structural functionalist and symbolic interactionist	developed model for professional socialization process	presents model of professional socialization; pre-socialization (prior and anticipatory socialization), formal socialization (content and structure), practice after socialization (practice setting and situational adaptation); professional identity is ongoing, phased not linear; informed by what precedes and comes after formal social work education; professional socialization based on distinct knowledge, values and skills and relationships with role models
Miller (2013)	<i>Journal of Social Work Education</i>	Quan	seven cohorts of social work students from beginning BSW to five-year post MSW; 489 total participants at US University	questionnaires social work identity, social work career influence, rewards and costs, effect of socializing agents	level of social work education or practice experience had effect on socialization; found gender differences in role expectations of social workers; anticipatory socialization plays key role in professional socialization; those who have better understanding of rewards and costs of social work careers have more idealistic attitude; recommend educators keep idealism alive by exposing students to real costs and benefits early on; understand what students carry with them as they enter social work education programs; demographics, personal experiences, and professional experiences
Mulder & Dull (2014)	<i>Social Work Education</i>	Qual	25 MSW students in a foundation practice course at US University	student and educator reflections	photovoice as a tool can provide a visual and narrative opportunity for reflection and expression in relation to the social work profession; students reported satisfaction with the tool in helping them reflect on a deep level; students were able to process identity in relation to family of origin and the profession; tool allows for introspection which is key for professional identity development

Oliver (2013)	<i>Social Work Education</i>	Concept	boundary spanning	educator reflection	when identity is hard to define it is easy to give up and identify with host organization; professional identity is shaped by personal values and mentors; formal social work education is just one part of professional identity development; interprofessional teams may confuse identity; social workers are particularly positioned to be "boundary spanners" working between systems with the broader context in mind, building relationships with those who are different from self, viewing system as whole instead of parts; argues social work education should make boundary spanning part of core identity for social workers; may position social work profession as ideal to work in growing interdisciplinary work
Osteen (2011)	<i>Journal of Social Work Education</i>	Qual	20 MSW students at US University	semi-structured interviews; thematic analysis	presents model of professional identity development for social work education programs; motivation (students were motivated to pursue MSW to help others/community, achieve professional legitimacy, flexibility/practicality of the MSW, and/or personal values align with values of profession); education and negotiation (incongruence between personal and professional values must be negotiated through explicit curriculum, classroom and field experiences); integration (occurs when students can articulate personal and professionals identities); recommend educators emphasize dynamic process of identity development and how students choose identities, different types of value incongruences and how to unpack
Rozas (2004)	<i>Smith College Studies in Social Work</i>	Concept	intergroup dialogue program (IDP)	educator reflection	intergroup dialogue program designed to give groups opportunities to talk across different socio-economic statuses; forming and building relationships, exploring differences and commonalities of experience, exploring hot topics, action planning and alliance building; once a week for two hours over 10 weeks; include discussion of definitions, small group reflection and experiential activities; students directly challenge each other; allows students to engage, ask how differences can be bridged;

					teaches process of recognizing and developing complex identities including professional identities
Scholar (2013)	<i>Social Work Education</i>	Qual	23 social work field supervisors in UK	three focus groups; thematic analysis	field supervisors have an active role in helping students understand impact of dress on professional identity; legitimacy or competency of students who do not "dress the part" is often questioned; dress should fit mainstream ideas of professionalism but should not create barriers between clients and social workers; expectations regarding dress varies depending on type of social work; understanding importance of dress is part of socialization to the profession
Sewpaul (2010)	<i>Social Work</i>	Concept	global social work professional identity	educator reflection	social work professionalism in social work education is "double-edged sword" - needed to establish legitimacy among professions but adopts a Western unipolar idea of social work identity
Shlomo, Levy & Itzhaky (2012)	<i>The Clinical Supervisor</i>	Quan	160 BSW students from Israeli University	questionnaires professional identity, satisfaction with supervision, empathy, coherence and values	the greater satisfaction with supervision the stronger the sense of professional identity; the more students' personal values aligned with social work values the stronger the sense of professional identity
Stanfield & Beddoe (2016)	<i>Social Work Education: The International Journal</i>	Qual	12 social work leaders in New Zealand	semi-structured interviews; thematic analysis	separation of personal and professional identities or lack thereof reflected by social media; call for social work educators to support students in the creation of their online identities; individual social workers use of social media impacts the collective identity of social workers
Stepteau-Watson (2012)	<i>Reflections</i>	Concept		educator reflection	professionalism as ability to connect theory to practice; happens over time through role plays, case studies and application papers; reflective and mature students = professionalism; display of enthusiasm important
Tsang (2011)	<i>Social Work Education</i>	Concept	systems theory	educator reflection	students develop professional identity by understanding their profession as extrinsic instrumental (exercise the technical application of knowledge and skills for problem

					solving), as extrinsic meaning (perceive their professions in terms of core values and ideology and/or as intrinsic meaning (personal meaning and significance); educators should help students reflect on professional identity in broader sense outside of individual content areas or classes using a sculpting process integrating knowledge and skills with social work identity; impact of family of origin on professional identity should be unpacked in social work classes
Urdang (2010)	<i>Social Work Education</i>	Concept	psychodynamic	educator reflection	recommends emphasizing self-awareness in classroom and field, use of psychodynamic theories to increase self-awareness, use of labs and observational experiences to increase self-awareness and aid in the development of professional identity
Valutis, Rubin & Bell (2012)	<i>Social Work Education</i>	Quan	152 female undergraduate students; compared social work to other majors at US University	objective measure of ego identity status instrument; Marcia's 4 dimensions of identity	Marcia's four dimensions of identity (identity diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium and achievement); study found significant difference in Achievement status for those over 35; in order to acquire social work values and ability to morally reason a student needs to reach personal identity achievement; differences in identity development not related to progression through undergrad education but rather age; no difference in social work or other majors; recommend social work educators consider identity development in teaching values and ethics; use group work with variety of ages in groups; supervision in field with younger and older adult pairings; important for social work to be embedded in liberal arts education; value acquisition and ethical decision-making is a life-long process; prioritize continuing education
Weiss, Gal & Cnaan (2004)	<i>Journal of Social Service Research</i>	Quan	223 BSW and MSW students across two Israeli universities and one US University	surveys preferences for client groups, practice settings	does not show the professional socialization of formal social work education has impact on professional preferences of students over time; educational process does not alter in a major way the professional preferences of students

Wiles (2013)	<i>Social Work Education</i>	Qual	seven BSW students from UK University	semi- structured interviews; discourse analysis	no one definition of professionalism; social work students construct identity by identifying with other social workers and by focusing on desired traits; viewed social work as part of core being; professional identity development produced changes to personal views and personal relationships; recommend educators provide intentional spaces to do identity work; recognize that identity work is a fluid life-long process
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Study Findings

Defining professionalism and professional identity development. Of the studies that sought to define professionalism or professional identity for social workers (n=8) all discussed difficulty with this task. Sources for defining professionalism varied from social work students to educators to practitioners. Studies and articles could not agree on a definition for professional social worker. All cited the wider perception and convoluted collective identity problem among social workers (Barretti, 2004a; Clare, 2006; Gitterman, 2014; Mackay & Zufferey, 2015; Oliver, 2013; Scholar, 2013; Sewpaul, 2010; Wiles, 2013). In lieu of creating a definition of professional social worker, authors presented characteristics, duties and purposes of professional social workers based on their research or conceptual arguments. Authors cited this as a starting point for assisting students with forming their professional identities. The most frequently stated characteristic of professional social workers cited by the publications was that social workers have unique and specific knowledge, skills, values and ethics distinguished from other professions (Cascio & Gasker, 2002; Kule & de Ruyter, 2009; Mackay & Zufferey, 2015; Miller, 2010). Other characterizations included: the social work profession is riddled with false dichotomies that need to be bridged (Gitterman, 2014), minority students view social work as the best career to work with vulnerable and oppressed populations as well as alignment with the cultural value of giving back to community (Daniel, 2011; Barretti, 2004a), and social work is holistic including an insider-out and empowerment stance (Bolin, et al., 2014; Clare, 2006, Daniel, 2011).

Components of professional identity development. The three most frequent themes describing key factors impacting professional identity development for social work students were: professional identity development requires general self-reflection or introspection about

the profession and use of self, professional identity is constructed by interacting with other social workers (faculty, role models, supervisors), and professional identity development requires reflection on and reconciliation of personal and professional values. See Table 2 for complete listing of themes. General self-reflection and introspection were also described as self-awareness, deep-learning, and use of self. There was a particular emphasis on the role of faculty and the implicit curriculum as co-creators and influencers of students' professional identity development.

Table 2

Factors impacting professional identity development of students ranked by frequency in publications

Factor	Publications	Citations
professional identity development requires general self-reflection or introspection about the profession and use of self	21	Askeland & Payne, 2006; Barretti, 2004a; Bolin, et al., 2014; Cagle, 2010; Cascio & Gasker, 2002; Clare, 2006; Clare, 2007; Daniel, 2011; Gitterman, 2014; Harrison, 2009; Larrison & Korr, 2013; McCaughan, Anderson & Jones, 2013; Miller, 2013; Mulder & Dull, 2014; Oliver 2013; Osteen, 2011; Rozas, 2004; Tsang, 2011; Urdang, 2010; Wiles, 2013
professional identity is constructed by interacting with other social workers (faculty, role models, supervisors)	12	Askeland & Payne, 2006; Barretti, 2004a; Bogo & Wayne, 2013; Cascio & Gasker, 2002; Daniel, 2007; Larrison & Korr, 2013; Levy, Shlomo & Itzhaky, 2014; Oliver, 2013; Scholar, 2013; Shlomo, Levy & Itzhaky, 2012; Valutis, Rubin & Bell, 2012; Wiles, 2013
professional identity development requires reflection on and reconciliation of personal and professional values	12	Barretti, 2004a; Barretti, 2004b; Cascio & Gasker, 2002; Daniel, 2011; Harrison, 2009; Larrison & Korr, 2013; Levy, Shlomo & Itzhaky, 2014; Osteen, 2011; Shlomo, Levy & Itzhaky, 2012; Stepteau-Watson, 2012; Valutis, Rubin & Bell, 2012; Wiles, 2013
professional identity development is a fluid and life long process	10	Barretti, 2004a; Barretti, 2004b; Bolin, et al., 2014; Daniel, 2011; Miller, 2013; Larrison & Korr, 2013; Oliver, 2013; Stepteau-Watson, 2012; Valutis, Rubin & Bell, 2012; Wiles, 2013
professional identity is or should be an integrated part of personal identity	10	Barretti, 2004a; Bolin, et al., 2014; Cagle, 2010; Clare, 2007; Daniel, 2011; Kole & de Ruyter, 2009; Mackay & Zufferey, 2015; Osteen, 2011; Stanfield & Beddoe, 2016; Wiles, 2013
professional identity development tied to age or maturity of student	4	Barretti, 2004a; Miller, 2013; Stepteau-Watson, X; Valutis, Rubin & Bell, 2012
professional identity is or should be separate from personal identity	3	Bolin, et al., 2014; Mackay & Zufferey, 2015; Stanfield & Beddoe, 2016
marginalization in education greatly impacts students of color and their professional identities	2	Daniel, 2007; Daniel, 2011

Models or stages of professional identity development. The literature sample in this review contained four distinct models or stages of social work student professional identity development. See Table 3 for a depiction of three models contained in the articles. Other publications included labeled categories of professional identity (see Table 1), however, they were not considered models that described ways in which students move through a process of identity development. The models all speak to the importance of recognizing and reflecting on personal and professional values. Each model considers the personal values and experiences students bring to social work education programs and the long, complex process of professional identity development. This process should be supported by educators through the implicit and explicit curricula.

Table 3

Models of professional identity development/professional socialization in social work education

Author	Key Aspects of Model	Key Assumptions
Miller (2010)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-socialization (prior and anticipatory socialization) 2. Formal socialization (content and structure) 3. Practice after formal socialization (practice setting and situational adaptation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experiences back to childhood, through formal education and after formal education all impact how a social worker becomes socialized to the profession. - Movement through the model overlaps and is ongoing throughout one's career. - Outcomes of the model include development of knowledge and skills, values, attitudes and professional social work identity which are aligned with CSWE EPAS.
Barretti (2004a)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expectation – experiences of compatibility to social work 2. Revelation – initial experiences with social work program 3. Refutation – students doubt their compatibility with the program 4. Negotiation – students use tools to lower stress and maintain status in the program 5. Adaptation – students reflect on growth over time and feel more confident 6. Affirmation - students report varying degrees of identification with the profession, acknowledge the profession requires lifelong learning and autonomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students mirrored process with role models - Process is full of conflict - Process begins well before program and continues after - Almost everything faculty do and say influenced students - Faculty are powerful co-creators of identity
Osteen (2010)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Motivation (students were motivated to pursue MSW to help others/community, achieve professional legitimacy, flexibility/practicality of the MSW, and/or personal values align with values of profession) 2. Education and negotiation (incongruence between personal and professional values must be negotiated through explicit curriculum, classroom and field experiences) 3. Integration (occurs when students can articulate personal and professional identities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasizes the congruency of personal and professional values as motivation to enter a social work professional program. - Students need to evaluate and negotiate value incongruences to then integrate professional and personal identities. - Social work educators are urged to support students in managing value conflicts.

Teaching strategies in implicit and explicit curriculum. As a natural extension, many recommended teaching strategies were offered as part of the discussion in empirical studies or as part of educator reflections in conceptual articles. The most frequent recommendation was to provide intentional spaces for identity work (Barretti, 2004a; Bolin, et al., 2014; Cagle, 2010; Harrison, 2009; Miller, 2013; Mulder & Dull, 2014; Osteen, 2011; Tsang, 2011; Wiles, 2013). Additional teaching recommendations and strategies cited include: use of the sculpting process to integrate values, skills, and knowledge with identity (Osteen, 2011; Tsang, 2011), unpacking what students bring to the program including impact of family of origin on professional identity (Miller, 2013; Mulder & Dull, 2014; Osteen, 2011; Tsang, 2011), and use of BSW-MSW student mentoring or role models to increase the sense of professional identity (Barretti, 2004a; Bogo & Wayne, 2013; Cascio & Gasker, 2002). Table 1 contains descriptions of another ten strategies cited by single authors.

Discussion

Implications for Social Work Education

This review serves as an update to the 2004 (Barretti, 2004b) systematic literature review on the professional socialization of social work students including publications from 2002-2016. First, the literature attempts to define the profession of social work but expresses great difficulty with this task. However, if educators do not have consistency on a foundational identity for social workers it is very difficult to help students with a professional identity development process. This review found a level of consistency in broad characteristics of the profession such as having a distinguishable set of knowledge, values, and skills in addition to social workers possessing a unique insider-outsider and empowerment stance in work with client systems.

The Barretti review (2004b) noted that professional identity development or professional socialization was perceived primarily as the acquisition of adoption of social work values. This updated review shows that scholars and educators are thinking beyond value acquisition when considering the process of professional identity development in social work education.

Furthermore, the literature expresses a holistic view of professional identity development that involves a great deal of self-reflection and introspection. It is as a complex process that begins prior to acceptance into a social work education program and continues throughout a career.

Confronting value conflicts and attempting to reconcile differences between personal and professional values is emphasized. Since marginalization greatly impacts individual student and collective identity development, educators should consider and/or consult with students of color and other minority status students about reducing acts of oppression and discrimination within their social work education program. Faculty, field supervisors, and other role models serving as mentors have a significant impact on the professional identity of students. Faculty have a strong influence and could use this position as an opportunity to reflect a social worker identity whenever interacting with students both within and outside the classroom environment. Findings indicate students are interested in co-creating identities with other students and faculty. Students are observing all interactions with faculty; all interactions are part of the implicit curriculum.

The literature further stresses the need for educators to integrate more teaching strategies to make professional identity development a part of the explicit curriculum and a more consistent part of the implicit curriculum. Several authors have offered recommendations to aid their colleagues in facilitating the topic of professional identity development. The most cited teaching recommendation is to create intentional spaces for work on professional identity development. The three models specific to social work student identity development and the many teaching

strategies provide practical starting points for educators to integrate identity work inside and outside of classrooms. Many publications urge educators to include field supervisors in making identity work explicit. Identifying elements of professional identity for social workers, models for identity development, and teaching strategies all support the intent of CSWE to make professional identity more explicit throughout the curricula.

Strengths and Limitations of Review

This review provides a comprehensive review of the literature since 2002 on the subject of professional identity development for social work students. There is no other review evident on this topic in the published literature. This review contributes to an area of teaching and learning scholarship that is in need of more attention. The subject of this review is of concern to many CSWE accredited social work education programs as professional identity is part of accreditation standards and is important to the future of the profession. The methodology of the review was thorough and systematic capturing a current picture of research and discourse. Results were synthesized and presented in an organized and practical manner with a focus on social work educators. It is the aim of this review to provide an easy to reference guide to the literature for professional identity development for social work students.

The review does not include a quality assessment of publications. Publications varied widely in terms of samples and methods. Conceptual articles were included to capture the breadth of discourse on this subject. However, this creates a challenge with using standardized quality assessment tools and with simple categorization of information. Findings from publications were heterogeneous making it difficult to draw sweeping conclusions.

Future Research

Research on professional identity development for social work students has multiple possibilities. This systematic review provides a point-in-time reference to build on with further study. Additional research on how oppression and discrimination impacts the professional identity development of students of color and minority-identified students is needed. Literature on the process of professional identity development specific to social work students is necessary to better understand how CSWE accreditation standards related to professional identity are being met by social work education programs. Scholarship on teaching and learning strategies for the explicit and implicit curricula may also be of particular relevance.

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Guiding Professional Identity Formation for Social Work Students: Poster Presentation

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Abstract

The following peer-reviewed poster presentation is based on the systematic literature review, product two of this banded dissertation. The poster was presented at the 2016 Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting (APM). Findings of the systematic literature review were reported including definitions of professional identity development in social work education, factors impacting professional identity development, and strategies and for developing a professional social work identity. An integrated model to help social work educators enhance professional identity development and professional socialization through the explicit and implicit curriculum was presented. A summary of presentation evaluations, a reflection on learning and an annotated bibliography are included in this report.

Keywords: professional identity development, social work education, professional socialization, social work students

Guiding Professional Identity Formation for Social Work Students: Poster Presentation

Acceptance Letter

CSWE 2016 APM Proposal Submission Acceptance - Cindy Locklear

<https://owa.uncp.edu/owa/#viewmodel=ReadMessageItem&ItemID=A...>

CSWE 2016 APM Proposal Submission Acceptance

cswe@confex.com

Wed 4/20/2016 2:37 PM

To: Cindy Locklear <cindy.locklear@uncp.edu>;



Dear Cindy E. Locklear:

Congratulations! We are pleased to inform you that your proposal, Student Development Theory: Guiding Professional Identity Formation for Social Work Students, has been accepted as an Interactive Poster in the Teaching Methods and Learning Styles Track for the 2016 Annual Program Meeting (APM). The APM will be held November 3–6, 2016 in Atlanta, GA at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis. Your presentation will be an important component of the event and we look forward to your participation!

You will be notified of your presentation date and time after the APM schedule is finalized in August 2016. Per the submission guidelines, you must be able to present on any of the following times (special scheduling requests cannot be accommodated):

- Friday, November 4: 7:30 am–4:15 pm
- Saturday, November 5: 7:30 am–4:15 pm
- Sunday, November 6: 7:30 am–11:00 am

NEXT STEPS

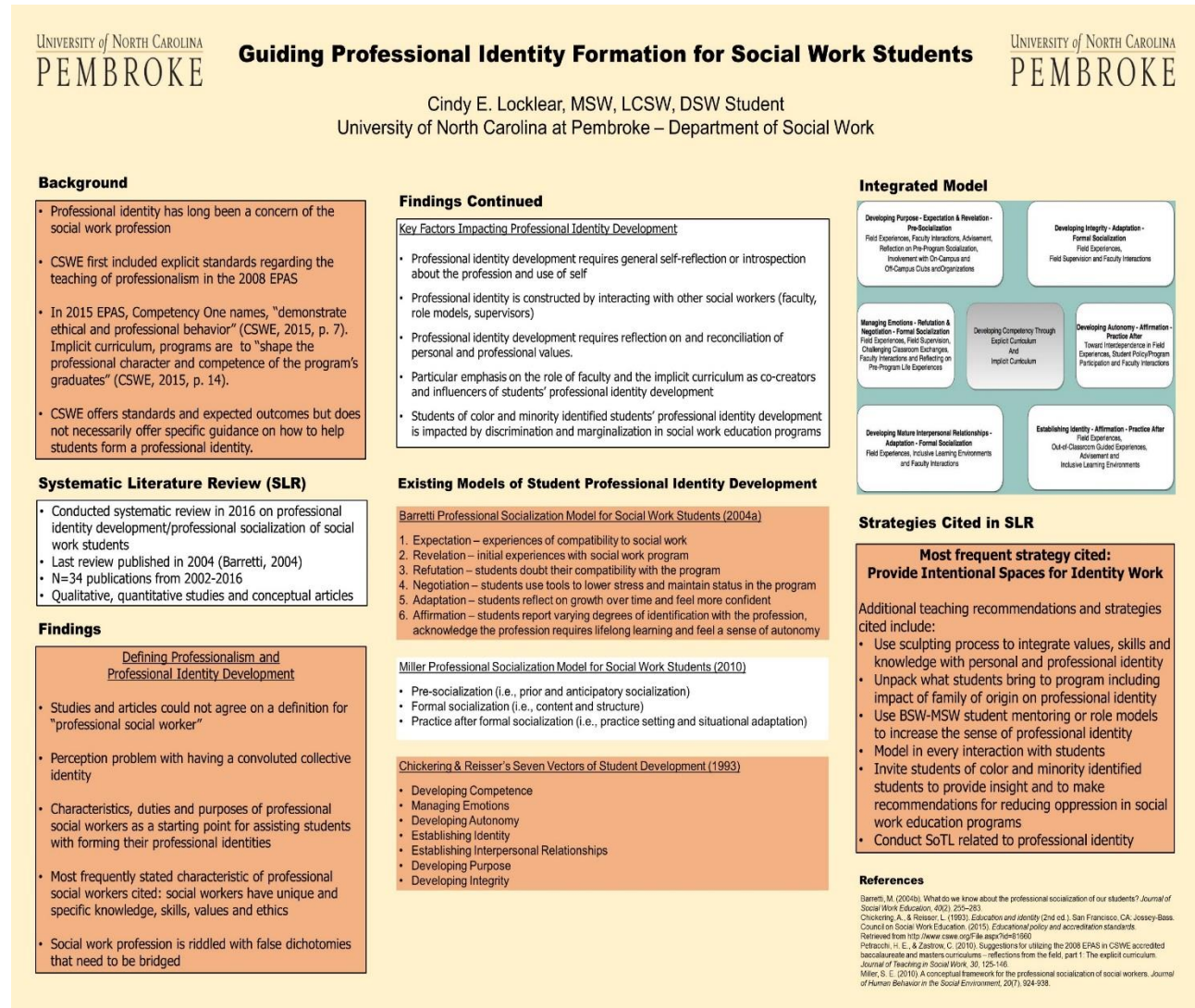
1. Review and sign the accepted presenter compliance policy by June 3, 2016: <http://cswe.confex.com/cswe/2016/speakerscorner.cgi?username=38158&password=153362&EntryType=Person>. Your signature represents your agreement to complete those requirements.
2. Per the [accepted presenter compliance policy](#), **each accepted presenter** is required to pre-register for APM by June 3, 2016. Click [here](#) for more information about registration.
3. Hotel rooms book up quickly for APM. Reserve yours as soon as possible through the [APM Housing website](#).
4. One LCD projector, screen, podium, and wired microphone will be available in the session rooms at no cost to the presenter. **We do not provide laptops or Internet access.** All presenters must provide their own laptop computers to connect to the LCD projectors. Presenters using Macintosh computers or iPads who wish to use the LCD projectors must provide their own connectors to the projectors. Internet access or other equipment will be a separate charge to the presenter, which you can request once your session is scheduled.

If you have any questions regarding your presentation or the 2016 APM, please e-mail apm@cswe.org or

Poster Presentation

The figure below is a copy of the poster presented at the 2016 Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting. It includes key findings from the systematic literature review conducted as part of this banded dissertation.

Figure 1. CSWE poster presentation.



Summary of Evaluations

While the presenter facilitated questions and addressed the material on the poster, a colleague invited each poster presentation attendee to complete a paper evaluation survey after viewing the poster and/or hearing presentation. Of the approximately twenty people who stopped by to view and/or engage with the author, 11 agreed to complete the evaluation. A colleague collected the evaluations (N=11) and totaled scores for reporting.

Table 1

CSWE poster evaluations

Evaluation Criteria	Effective	Adequate	Needs More (preparation, practice, re-thinking)
Overall poster appearance	9	2	0
Provided a clear context	8	3	0
Appropriate for audience	11	0	0
Examples or details where needed	10	1	0
Good organization and flow	9	1	1
Amount of detail is appropriate	10	1	0

Reflection

This poster presentation provided an opportunity to disseminate the results of the systematic literature review, *Professional Identity Development among Graduate and Undergraduate Social Work Students: A Systematic Literature Review*. Given the limited space of a poster, it was a challenge to ensure all key takeaways were included. I designed the poster to move in a logical sequence, accurately reporting results while providing practical strategies and directions for future research.

Several attendees expressed interest in the topic because of their own teaching experiences and challenges. These educators reported difficulty with helping students define their identity as new professionals. They viewed the ability to define identity as a first step for helping professionals to decide how to behave as a professional during day-to-day interactions. Attendees were seeking research-based models to help them walk students through a professional identity development process. They also noted the lack of available scholarship on this topic and their interest in teaching and learning strategies to enhance professional identity development. The model presented on the poster was a result of integrating existing models with the Council on Social Work Education Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. More research is needed to develop a more comprehensive and inclusive model that is tested with students and educators over time.

Based on my own self-reflection and the feedback provided on evaluations, I would make the following changes – (1) increase contrast shading boxes to increase visibility; (2) provide a handout with key findings and contact information; (3) clarify introduction to presentation for attendees providing more context and direction at the beginning of talk; (4) provide case examples of social work student identity development to illustrate abstract concepts.

Annotated Bibliography

Barretti, M. (2004a). The professional socialization of undergraduate social work students. The *Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work*, 9(2), 9-30. Retrieved from <http://jbsw.org/loi/basw>

The Barretti socialization model was developed based on a qualitative study of 20 BSW students. The model is comprised of six phases: (1) expectation – experiences of compatibility to social work (similar to pre-socialization); (2) revelation – initial experiences with social work program; (3) refutation – students doubt their compatibility with the program; (4) negotiation – students use tools to lower stress and maintain status in the program; (5) adaptation – students reflect on growth over time and feel more confident; (6) affirmation - students report varying degrees of identification with the profession and they recognize that the profession requires lifelong learning and a sense of autonomy. Overall the study and model acknowledge the value of viewing professional identity from a developmental perspective, one that is both methodical and convoluted.

Barretti, M. (2004b). What do we know about the professional socialization of our students? *Journal of Social Work Education*, 40(2), 255–283. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23044020>

In a limited review of the literature published on professional identity and professional socialization since 1990 three themes were identified – (1) the role of social work education programs in the professional socialization of students; (2) the models for the professional identity development of social work students and; (3) the factors students bring to their education/social work program. The literature on social work education and professional socialization and identity development demonstrates the difficulty with

measuring a multi-dimensional long-term process. Barretti urged future researchers to broaden the definition of professional socialization beyond the acquisition of values and to consider the effect of personal identity development and maturation.

Chickering, A., & Reisser, L. (1993). *Education and identity* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Chickering first proposed a model of psychosocial development specific to students in higher education in 1969. The model consists of seven vectors (defined as a carrier from one point to another) and asserts that students who attain these seven vectors will become adults who thrive in a global society because they are self-actualized, independent and interdependent, multiculturally aware, and interpersonally competent. Chickering and Reisser view the vectors as ways of recording changes or shifts in thinking and behavior because it is difficult to see such shifts as they are happening intrapsychically. Shifts in thinking occur based on a complex tapestry of experiences such as cultural immersion, service, conflict, and meeting new people. Development can be seen over time.

The following represents a summary of the theory's main concepts organized by the seven vectors from Chickering and Reisser (1993): (1) Developing physical, athletic, artistic, social and intellectual competence including tasks such as acquiring knowledge, thinking critically, creating ideas and communicating with skill, (2) Managing emotions by increasing awareness of one's feelings, expressing feelings and controlling impulses, (3) Developing autonomy through increased emotional independence, self-direction, mobility and problem solving ability, (4) Establishing identity through personal stability and integration, self-acceptance, an increased sense of cultural heritage, increased comfort with body, gender expression and sexuality, (5) Establishing interpersonal

relationships through increased acceptance of differences between individuals and an increased capacity for mature and intimate relationships, (6) Developing purpose through clear career or vocational goals and meaningful commitments with other people, (7) Developing integrity by shifting from rigid thinking to a value system that respects beliefs of others and aligning personal values with actions.

Council on Social Work Education. (2015). *Educational policy and accreditation standards*.

Retrieved from <https://www.cswe.org/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS>

The 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) provide guidance for social work education programs seeking accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education. The EPAS contains 4 elements central to an integrated curriculum: (1) program mission and goals, (2) explicit curriculum, (3) implicit curriculum, and (4) assessment. The explicit curriculum includes 9 competencies and associated behaviors consisting of knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes.

Miller, S. E. (2010). A conceptual framework for the professional socialization of social workers.

Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 20(7), 924-938.

doi:10.1080/10911351003751934

Miller presents a model to help social work educators guide students towards a developed professional identity. The Miller model begins with pre-socialization (prior and anticipatory socialization) and includes formal socialization (content and structure) and practice after formal socialization (practice setting and situational adaptation) processes. This model contends that experiences prior to, through and after formal education all impact how a social worker becomes socialized to the profession. Movement through the

model is ongoing throughout one's career. Outcomes of the model include development of knowledge and skills, values, attitudes and professional social work identity.

Miller, S. E. (2013). Professional socialization: A bridge between the explicit and implicit curricula. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 49(3), 368-386.

doi:10.1080/10437797.2013.796773

Miller conducted an empirical study of professional socialization, which measured commitment to social work values, social work idealism and social work identity comparing beginning BSW students to alumni who were five years post-MSW. A convenience sample of current BSW and MSW students from 25 different classes (exact sample size of current students not provided) and a random sample of 500 MSW alumni at a public mid-Atlantic University were included in the study. Current students and alumni were given three measures (the Professional Opinion Scale, the Social Work Idealism assessment and the Social Work Identity assessment) all designed to capture attitudes and beliefs related to social work identity. Study findings included an analysis of relationships between professional identity and gender socialization, age and anticipatory socialization or identification with the profession prior to entering a program of study. Variations in the level of identification (defined as acceptance of social work values, a commitment to social justice and idealism of the profession) with the profession appear to be impacted by age, gender and anticipatory socialization.